

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 02037

FOR SECRETARY OF DEFENSE BROWN FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, SP, US
SUBJECT: VISIT OF SPANISH OPPOSITION SOCIALIST LEADERS
TO WASHINGTON ON DEFENSE QUESTIONS

1. THE CHAIRMAN OF THE DEFENSE COMMITTEE OF THE CONGRESS OF DEPUTIES, (LOWER HOUSE), SOCIALIST DEPUTY ENRIQUE MUGICA, ACCOMPANIED BY SOCIALIST DEPUTY LUIS SOLANA, WILL BE IN WASHINGTON AT U.S. GOVERNMENT INVITATION, (AS LEADER GRANTEES), DURING THE WEEK OF MARCH 6 THROUGH 11.

2. BOTH MUGICA AND SOLANA ARE LEADING DEFENSE POLICY FIGURES OF SPAIN'S MAJOR OPPOSITION PARTY, THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY (PSOE), WITH SOLANA MORE AN EXPERT IN THESE MATTERS THAN MUGICA. SOLANA INCIDENTALLY IS ALSO CHAIRMAN OF THE CONGRESS COMMITTEE OF FINANCE. THEY WILL BE HOLDING CONVERSATIONS WITH EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE BRANCH LEADER ON BASIC DEFENSE ISSUES, PARTICULARLY SPANISH POTENTIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH NATO AND THE FUTURE OF THE U.S. MILITARY FACILITIES IN SPAIN.

3. AS YOU KNOW, THE SPANISH SOCIALISTS HAVE STRONG REPRESENTATION IN THE LOWER HOUSE (118 SEATS OUT OF 350) AND
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THEY ARE ACTIVELY PURSUING POWER AFTER THE NEXT NATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, WHICH COULD TAKE PLACE LATE THIS YEAR OR EARLY NEXT YEAR. THE SOCIALISTS PRESENTLY OPPOSE SPANISH MEMBERSHIP IN NATO AND THE CONTINUATION OF U.S. BASE RIGHTS WHEN THE CURRENT TREATY EXPIRES IN 1981. THEY ARE NOT CAUSING US ANY TROUBLE SO FAR WITH REGARD TO ARRANGEMENTS WE PRESENTLY HAVE UNDER THE TREATY. THE

PSOE, HOWEVER, DOES STILL HAVE HANG-UPS OVER OUR PAST
COLLABORATION WITH FRANCO IN THE DEFENSE AREA.

4. I ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE VISIT OF MUGICA AND
SOLANA AS IT PROVIDES US WITH A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO
EXPOSE THEM TO OUR DEFENSE PHILOSOPHY AND THE FACTS OF
LIFE WHICH LIE BEHIND IT. BOTH MUGICA AND SOLANA ARE
OPEN TO DIALOGUE AND ARE RELATIVELY FLEXIBLE AND PRAGMATIC
IN THEIR APPROACH TO DEFENSE ISSUES.

5. I SHOULD BE VERY GRATEFUL IF YOU COULD FIND THE TIME
DURING THEIR WASHINGTON STAY TO MEET WITH MUGICA AND
SOLANA TO GIVE THEM YOUR OWN VIEWS ON THE PROBLEMS OF
WESTERN DEFENSE, AND THE REASONS WHY IT IS SO IMPORTANT
THAT LIKE-MINDED COUNTRIES OF THE WESTERN WORLD COOPERATE
AND COORDINATE THEIR DEFENSE POSTURE AS A SHIELD AGAINST
THE PERCEIVED THREAT.

6. WARM REGARDS. STABLER

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